

A COOKING LESSON

Stage Dinners That Are Real and Made in One's Presence.

CULINARY MYSTERIES UNVEILED

The Experiences of a Reporter Who Learned to Cook.

AN EMERGENCY DINNER

If there is ever a time when a man feels the truth of the saying that it is not good for him to be alone it is when a cruel editor has sent him single-handed to report a cooking lecture.

The feeling of utter loneliness that comes over him as he gazes on the overwhelming majority of ladies makes him turn his homelike eyes upon the ebony-skinned chef on the stage with a brotherly feeling warmer than the steaming puree on the gas range.

The stage setting for the cooking lecture is unique.

A regular cook stove stands at the middle of the back, with the stove pipe meandering out of an adjacent window in the good old way. Down nearer the front is a gas stove. A "property" table loaded with utensils stands at the left, while foremost is the patent kitchen table, incognita, the marvel of the age, a kitchen table warranted to contain more drawers, shelves, hooks, spoons, knives, kettles and coffee mills than anything on earth, and keep up appearances as a neat little office desk.

The stage kitchen melts into a fringe of evergreens on the left. On the right is a dining room, separated from the kitchen by a clothes line trimmed with asparagus.

The table is set, but as the company is



The Teacher.

large, the refreshments are handed round instead, and the dining room is only looked at.

These details of the scene are not absorbed at first; they leak into a man's mind, so to speak, in the course of events. At first he only sees the neat high priestess of the Order of Good Cookery at the patent table, and has an indistinct recollection of being a boy in school and a severe young teacher making him sit with the girls to punish him.

The Emergency Dinner.

The reporter had selected the emergency dinner as being the one that would contain least difficulties for himself and most all-around usefulness for the public. Every one knows how trying it is to have company drop in unexpectedly just before dinner, with nothing in the house to eat but a cooky and a sad-eyed egg left from breakfast.

But the menu the teacher proposed to evolve from the contents of the average refrigerator in just one hour was not such a simple thing.

A puree of green peas, a salmon soufflé with potato balls, there being no meat in the house, some macaroni and sauce, a vegetable terrine, a cold roast, a cold chicken, and even a dessert, snow balls, with lovely frothy sauce on them. All in an hour.

And this is the way to do it: For the



The Problem of the Egg.

Preparations must now begin for the snow balls. The assistant takes three eggs and undertakes to separate them. He breaks the shell and gets a gob of albumen suspended with suspense for fear the yolk will tumble out the reporter, bewildered by the rapidly succeeding events of this dramatic half hour, is shocked to hear that the sauce, that everlasting sauce, had gotten too thick by standing and must be thinned a little. This does not rattle the cook, however.

Suddenly, one hardly knows how, the dinner is done.

The soup has presumably been served, the teacher says, meaning that the bowl is somewhere in the back benches slowly making its circuit among the audience. A very tasty soup.

The macaroni comes out of the oven and starts the rounds. And the soufflé. There on a platter lies a fish that never swam on sea or land, a plainer soufflé, but a culinary triumph. Fat, pink and toothsome, in a bed of potato balls, and lo, the sauce, smooth, creamy and delicious after being so terribly stirred up awhile ago. So should the hostess come out of the trying ordeal of preparing a dinner for unexpected company.

But it was a fatal moment, for by the time he had collected his thoughts the soup was all made, and they were getting ready to cook the macaroni.

Macaroni au gratin (so called because you grate the cheese in this case) was made from spaghetti, because, for an emergency dinner, you must do it in a hurry, and spaghetti is smaller and cooks faster.

Macaroni and cheese must be put in boiling water and kept on a jump. Never stir it under any circumstances, and do not let it boil the better. Rice, which is not to be washed—it takes the starch out—and nothing is more unpleasant than rice not starched stiff enough. For purposes of cleanliness rub the rice in a piece of cheese cloth.



Knowing It All.

While this was being explained the spaghetti had been all broken up and put to boil; the teacher had taken up a tin mold of peculiar shape and painted the inside of it with a nice little brush dipped in melted butter; the assistant had shaken all the properties around, and had been back and forth through the evergreen hedge into the pantry a dozen times.

Now the lesson was interrupted to show a dish made at a previous lesson, a German salad, with sardines in it. This was served in the audience to be admired. The little jellyfish sardines all had their tails one way, and nice little pieces of red beet between them, and looked very natural.

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Had people all brought forks? No; no one had a fork, and the maid went back on the stage intact. People who go to cooking lectures ought to know enough to bring forks.

Suddenly we find ourselves in the pure again. A cooking lecture lacks continuity. Can cooking a dinner really be like that? Can't a man think about jellyfish sardines a minute without missing the vital point about pea soup? It will curdle and make an awful time of it something happens; however, if you take it off the stove it is all right.

Matters were now getting complicated. It was 4:30, the evening was nearly over. Things were in the state which in the ordinary emergency dinner gives the cook a duck. Not so with this. Calmly the teacher explained that as things were supposed to be prepared in haste the salad for the dinner would be lettuce, which was to be dressed on the table, and the row of Christmas trees at L. U. R. came the assistant, unblinking, with a dish of undressed lettuce in his hand.



Inspecting the Result.

The salmon soufflé and the macaroni au gratin were now in a close heat with the chicken and macaroni, but the absorbing topic was cream sauce.

The recipe for snowballs for dessert had been given, but they were to be made later. The cheese for the macaroni must always be melted with the butter and milk and poured over the macaroni; that prevents the possibility of getting helped to a large tract of plain macaroni, while some other fellow gets all the cheese, a disappointing experience to all lovers of the gratinated article.

American Women and Sauce.

When the question of sauce came up again the teacher said the French have a saying that American women cannot cook because they know so little about sauce.

Probably the sauce has been diverted from proper culinary channels heretofore. At all events the sauce explained at this lecture was purely edible. White sauce was selected because it is easier to make. Brown sauce is similar, but darker completed. A teaspoonful of butter, one of flour and a cup of milk, cream or stock makes a sauce, but the flour must be cooked in a pan, and the whole stirred assiduously. No one can write an essay on pagan philosophy and make sauce Bechamel at the same time. All attention must be centered on the stirring, and on no account salt the thing until it is off the fire, else it may curdle and spoil everything. But the sauce was not made straight away like this. The salmon had to be patted into a mold and put to steam in just so much water. A potato

was denuded of its skin and then a little tool like an exaggerated mustard spoon was jabbed into its side, twisted viciously and jerked out again with a helpless little potato ball, which was immediately dropped in a bowl of water. A potato which has been subjected to this process for some time becomes badly pockmarked, but may be utilized for mashed potato still.

A Comoliseur.

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A Christmas Morning Ride With a Railroad Engineer.

IN THE CAB OF NO. 106.

Watching the Dawn Going a Mile a Minute.

WEIRD, INTERESTING SCENES.

Written for The Evening Star.

WANTED TO BE shaken up, excited, aroused! I wasn't bilious, neither was I. I felt the need of stimulus, and my theory is that my condition was the result of having been continuously in the city of Washington from the 6th day of last August until the coming of the holiday recess.

Even the charming capital city of our country becomes sluggish and uninteresting under certain conditions.

It happened that at 2 o'clock last Christmas morning, as I was leaving the city for the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad, approaching Charlottesville, Va., I was according to my request—aroused by the porter of the sleeper on which I had been a passenger since leaving Washington with "We'll be in Charlottesville in about twenty minutes, sah."

But the cause of this midnight alarm was a bit of official paper in my vest pocket, signed and countersigned, which gave me the privilege of riding on the locomotive from Charlottesville to Clifton Forge, 100 miles, at the head of a solidly vestibuled train of nine cars, and that, too, over the peaks and through the gaps and valleys of the Blue Ridge and the Shenandoah.

I had run logs on the "drive," I had shot the rapids at Salt Ste Marie, I "did" the Brooklyn bridge when it was but little more than a couple of ropes with a single board swung between them, but I had never ridden on a locomotive; I had traversed the canyons of the Grand, climbed up most of the "Robbers Roost," and down a majority of the "lovers' leaps," but I had never seen the peaks of the North mountain or the Alleghenies of the Virginias. It was a test in every way that I long had coveted, and I was happy.

I am fond of the sociability to be found at the railway station in a small city. It is so spontaneous and so hearty. The station agent, the baggage agent and the telegraph operator—it is better even when he is all three in one—look upon the stranger who jumps off the train to stretch his legs, as a personal friend and patron.

"It would talk; Lord! how it talked!" Within five minutes after I landed at Charlottesville I had learned that "Monticello," the home of Thomas Jefferson, was "away over there on the mountain," and that I had just passed through "his birthplace" at Shadwell, "bout four miles back," also that Presidents James Madison and James Monroe, Lewis and Clarke, the explorers, the United States Senator, and the Virginia House of Delegates, had all been born in the neighborhood.

Amelia Rives Chanler, had been well-known figures on the streets of Charlottesville in times past. "I reckon this is your first visit in these parts," ventured the station agent. "You should go up and see the University of Virginia before you leave. That's here, too, and it's the greatest of all the universities of the South."

On No. 106.

Here, Conductor Jones, coming from the telegraph office, said he guessed we had changed engines by this time, and so I accompanied him to the head of our train, when I was introduced to Henry Johnson, a clean-cut, quiet-mannered young man, and engineer of "A-Hundred-and-Sixty."

He noted that we were to have a tandem-train with 106 as the leader, and 128 just back of her as helper. The slight did my soul good, because I felt that there was no chance of getting stalled going up the mountains. So, climbing up after Mr. Johnson into the cab of 106, I was introduced to F. Manney, the fireman, a young man with a clean face, a weak-mustache, and, between his teeth, a newly lighted cigarette—a combination which, when I looked at his soot-stained cap and blouse, amused me.

As the engineer curled his right leg up on his narrow shelf of a seat, and putting his head out of the window, looked toward the rear of the train, the fireman fixed the leather cushion on his bench for my occupation. At the same time he explained, apologetically: "We don't pull drivers for minute or two, and so I'm taking a sort of farewell whiff."

Fortunately, for me, No. 106 had a real cab with four or five feet of clear space between its furnace door and tender instead of the high, twin-stall sort of arrangement which the larger engines have. The engineer and fireman were perched, as it were, on the very quarters of their steed.

And so it happened that, when the engine and tender came to a halt, the fireman and I could look out of the window and see the landscape as it came along, and the engineer could see the landscape as it came along, and the fireman and I could look out of the window and see the landscape as it came along.

It is fifteen miles across the valley from Charlottesville to the Blue Ridge, miles marked by the orchards and buildings of well-housed communities as may be found in the Old Dominion; homes which, while they were less shrouded by the clouds of battle than were their neighbors during the civil war, were shelters alike to the men under Jackson, Sheridan, Shields and Ewell, and the store houses of the most prosperous of the confederacy.

Across this picture in the perfect glory of a Christmas moon—a brilliance that was a midnight dream of day—we rolled and rumbled over little bridges, around wood lots, by the side of turnpikes, along brooks and under the shadows of half-grown bluffs, and it was during that ride that I learned two facts: First, that the alleged unbroken, interesting and comfortable conversations carried on in locomotive cabs between engineers and firemen while making a run are, well, they do not take place. They read fairly well in the "Ladies' Home Journal."

Second, that the alleged unbroken, interesting and comfortable conversations carried on in locomotive cabs between engineers and firemen while making a run are, well, they do not take place. They read fairly well in the "Ladies' Home Journal."

It is a race between the fireman and the engineer in grade or level, leaves the matter of retaining one's seat on the surface of a shiny, slippery leather cushion wholly to one's own ingenuity.

In this respect I obtained the shaking up I sought. In other ways was I excited, but as yet I had not been started. The strict devotion to his charge on the part of the engineer was exciting. There he sat with his eyes to the front, one hand on the brake lever and the other on the throttle, ready to pull either, his only variations being an occasional touch on the whistle lever and now and then a turn on the sand wheel with a very heavy lead.

Usually somewhat stupid, but in a locomotive cab and to a visitor it is very exciting. It is a race between the fireman and the engineer in grade or level, leaves the matter of retaining one's seat on the surface of a shiny, slippery leather cushion wholly to one's own ingenuity.

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ing white-hot mouth of the furnace.

"Now we've got the whale!" shouted Mr. Mahaney, as we began the ascent of the mountains, and for the hundred time glanced at the pointer to see if it was at the 150 point and was contented.

A Mountain Climb.

There is nothing exciting, so far as speed is concerned, about a mountain climb on a locomotive. On the other hand, I am convinced that there can be few scenes of thrilling beauty than were the color studies shown on the early Christmas morning. The mountains close at hand were black or brown or gray, according as the moon concealed or revealed herself. The foot hills—now showing themselves to the right and then, dodging behind our train, to look up at us from the left—were always blue, but with a gauze of gray softly laid across their charms. The gray was a contrast of blue, showing up its surface great ranges of fleecy mountains with wonderful perspective effects, ever changing and always new, because of their subtle capering with the stars and in the moonlight. New plowed fields and old, old turnpikes lighted to the degree seemed changed into pretty shining lakes and winding streams of silver. Down the hill sides came solid phalanxes of blue-black forests—on their way to the foot of the mountain—leaving a sagging gap away over against the horizon. The farm houses and barns seemed touched with wisps of silver light, and remembering that it was Christmas morning, I was prepared to see at any turn our jolly-faced old Santa Claus and his weird retinue waiting a cordial good morning to us as we met.

Hard Work.

Just then, however, I heard the engineer soliloquizing: "If she hangs on a hundred yards further 'ell make it, and I guess she will." Then I appreciated the fact that our speed was very limited, while the heavy pantings of the two locomotives close at hand were a hard one. Then I saw a tiny white flame away up ahead of us where our track merged into a single line of light and next I noticed that our gauge still showed 150 pounds of steam, and that the engine of our fireman was covered with perspiration.

But our team was a "stayer" and, as the engineer predicted, "she hung on." We reached the little light and directly ahead we saw a small, white, round object, which, with a little black spot at its base, shot went the windows of our cab and the darkness was plunged into a universe of light. The engine of the train was a distance of seven-eighths of a mile under the summit of the Blue Ridge, and the engine of the train was a distance of seven-eighths of a mile under the summit of the Blue Ridge, and the engine of the train was a distance of seven-eighths of a mile under the summit of the Blue Ridge.

I wasn't for long, however, because, presently, like being plunged headlong through the vampire trap at the pantomime, our engine leaped out into the light and we were in the "Robbers Roost" again. And what a world! Far across the peaks of the North mountain to the north and south as far as could be seen, were orchards, fields, homes and villages.

Down Grade.

Here was my opportunity! I was to be started, and that's what I was there for! Gladly did I hear the engine of the train whistle which called in the trainman at the rear end of the train—now that the tunnel had been safely passed—and longingly did I view the miles of down grade between us and Waynesboro'. Then we stopped for water. Having finished our errand at the water tank, we started on the race to Waynesboro'. The engine of the train was a distance of seven-eighths of a mile under the summit of the Blue Ridge, and the engine of the train was a distance of seven-eighths of a mile under the summit of the Blue Ridge.

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As the engineer curled his right leg up on his narrow shelf of a seat, and putting his head out of the window, looked toward the rear of the train, the fireman fixed the leather cushion on his bench for my occupation. At the same time he explained, apologetically: "We don't pull drivers for minute or two, and so I'm taking a sort of farewell whiff."

Fortunately, for me, No. 106 had a real cab with four or five feet of clear space between its furnace door and tender instead of the high, twin-stall sort of arrangement which the larger engines have. The engineer and fireman were perched, as it were, on the very quarters of their steed.

And so it happened that, when the engine and tender came to a halt, the fireman and I could look out of the window and see the landscape as it came along, and the engineer could see the landscape as it came along, and the fireman and I could look out of the window and see the landscape as it came along.

It is fifteen miles across the valley from Charlottesville to the Blue Ridge, miles marked by the orchards and buildings of well-housed communities as may be found in the Old Dominion; homes which,